

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

May 7, 2018

United States Environmental Protection Agency
Regional Administrator Cathy Stepp
Region 5
77 West Jackson Blvd
Chicago, IL 60604-3590

Dear Administrator Stepp:

Thank you for meeting with us on April 9, 2018 as you begin as Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Region 5 Administrator. The professional and scientific staff of EPA Region 5 provide incredibly vital work for the health, safety, and enjoyment of our region. As Members of Congress representing the Great Lakes region, we want to ensure that EPA Region 5 has the resources, personnel, and management it needs to protect our communities' air and water.

In that spirit, we were interested when you indicated that proposed staffing and budget cuts were the result of top-down instructions from the administration rather than the needs of EPA Region 5. We very much appreciate your promise to provide us with the needs-based information that was provided on behalf of Region 5 during the budget deliberations.

In addition, we would like to follow up on a number of more detailed questions you were not able to fully answer in our meeting.

1. Congress has provided level funding for EPA for FY 2018, yet staffing levels in Chicago are down close to 100 people. Will EPA Region 5 be hiring in FY 2018? Is there still a hiring freeze at EPA?
2. Are there any plans to consolidate Region 5 with another regional office or move staff out of the Chicago office?
3. We understand that EPA HQ has provided funding and staffing levels to the Regions and laboratories based on the EPA FY 2018 budget. Is that correct? We would like a copy of what has been transmitted so we can assess its adequacy.
4. In January, AFGE Local 704 submitted, upon your request, a list of critical vacancies in the Air, Water, Land & Chemicals, Great Lakes and Superfund Divisions as well as the Chicago Regional Laboratory. Have you shared the list of vacancies with Administrator Pruitt and his staff as they prepare the EPA Budget? If not, can you please advise why that request has not been made to properly staff these critical programs?
5. On what dates have either you or Assistant Regional Administrator Cheryl Newton met in person with leaders of AFGE Local 704? Going forward, are regular meetings planned?
6. When we discussed the Foxconn plant near Racine, Wisconsin, it was acknowledged the predicted volume of water the plant is planning to use is within the allotment for that area

for industrial use. Please confirm you will assure all members of the Great Lakes Compact the predicted use of water will not be exceeded.

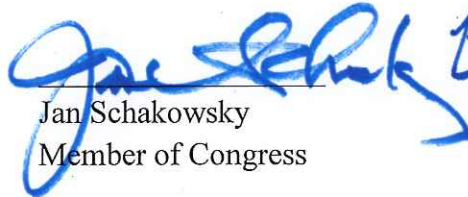
7. In addition, as we discussed, the chemicals used in the electronics plant require testing to determine their safety. Will you direct the Chicago Regional Laboratory to conduct testing and provide a report to the Wisconsin DNR/EPA and all members of the Great Lake Compact?
8. We were surprised to learn that you will not be recusing yourself from matters concerning the Foxconn plant. Please provide us with a list from your office of who will be recusing themselves.

We would appreciate a written response to these questions no later than May 18, 2018. We look forward to working with you to ensure clear air, clean water, and a healthy environment throughout the Great Lakes region.

Sincerely,



Bill Foster
Member of Congress



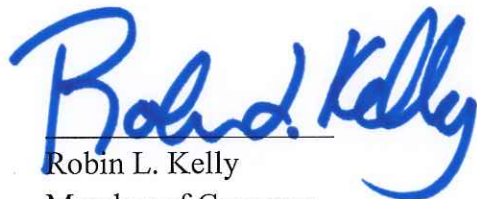
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Member of Congress



Bradley S. Schneider
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Mike Quigley
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